

and it is a special object with them to furnish a complete abstract of the government, condition and progress of the State, and of those of its institutions, in which the people are all interested. And yet not one word is said about the most important and universal of our interests! A School system, educating nine-tenths of the future citizens of the State, and on which the State and Counties are annually expending over two hundred thousand dollars, is not once mentioned among the statistics of North-Carolina! The American Almanac, published in Boston, will be found, in the No. for 1856, to have been much more considerate: and I mention this little circumstance not to make a grave complaint of it, but as a remarkable proof of that very general disposition prevailing among us, to forget our Common Schools, and never in our thoughts, speeches or writings, to enumerate them among our valuable, or even note-worthy institutions.

As a people, as politicians, as writers, as public-spirited citizens, we do nothing to keep them in an honorable position before the public eye; and when they are brought up in public assemblies or in private circles, it is generally to be lectured for making no greater progress, to be discouraged by invocations of failure and disaster, and to be dismissed with contemptuous epithets, and hasty assurances that it is perfectly useless for them to try to succeed. And still these very persons will rail on the Officers of the system for not stimulating it more effectually!

Not unfrequently all the efforts and all the hopes of these officers and of the friends of the system will be ridiculed as fruitless and visionary, with one breath, and with the next, in the same speech, these persons will be assailed for not doing more good!

This view of the subject, by no means distorted or misrepresented, is calculated to chill the energies of the most sanguine friends of the cause; and if they labored only in making speeches, often addressing empty benches, and hardly ever leaving any lasting impression on the small miscellaneous audiences gathered together from various motives, they would have reason to despond.

But I have labored, I trust, with more comprehensive